

Western MRS Meeting Notes  
November 30, 2007  
AB Tech

Counties Present: Buncombe, Catawba, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, McDowell, Swain, Transylvania, Yancey

Introductions

News from Raleigh

Training Issues – Ginger Caldwell

Coming Soon – SOC

Tool Time – Ecomaps, Genograms, Scaling

News from Raleigh

- Charisse Johnson has been named as the new Section Chief – will start Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>. Was formerly at the Division as head of the Community Based Programs team and left to go to Wayne Co DSS.
- Getting started working on the Work First and MRS Institute. Both will be at the Koury Center in Greensboro. WF is in late April, MRS is in August.
- MRS is now available in DW.

Training Issues –

Talked about the 3 tier training system.

Every six months all intro classes are offered at least once in each of the centers.

Are counties able to get their new workers the training that they need in the first year?

- Frequency and location is an issue. Realize that there are limited resources, but turnover is very high so this increases the need.
- A large county is frustrated because they need to have 12 people attend and they can only get 4 registered so they have to send the others to remote locations. Have asked if there is a way to have trainers come to large counties or a region if they can fill a class completely.
- Legal/medical - workers need both of these and they are offered on the same day so you can't go to both. Used to be consecutive days so that you could travel and be gone one trip and get both, but now you can't attend both in one session.
- On-line classes. We will never go completely on line, but are going to continue to do some this way. (People at this meeting had tried it and were ok with it but it was hard to find the time to actually do it. Overall felt on-line was good as an option.)
  - Trying to put some dimensions of more classes on-line. Trend to go to blended trainings where there is some on-line and some face-to-face training. As of now Child Development is the only one all on-line, and there are no immediate plans to make any other ones totally on-line.
  - Pre-Service and Supervisor Transfer of Learning course are partially on-line.
  - Computer Equipment needed for on-line training – depends on which kind of training you are doing. Two types of on-line training:

- Self Paced – work at your own pace, you just need access to the Internet.
  - Live on line – have a microphone and a headset and you are able to talk to other participants in the class. You will need a headset (about \$15)
- Ginger has developed a handout talking about how to avoid distractions and stay on track with on-line training. Some advance planning will help participants get the most out of it.
- Issues with it: some counties have cubicles, or shared offices and it is distracting while trying to do training. Because they have to be on their own computer they can't just go to another room. Also some counties share computers and it is hard when someone is using it all day.
- Ncswlearn.org – this is the portal to access for any on-line classes. Currently you can register without having a log-in, but they encourage you to register via this system. Ginger has a handout which is an overview of ncswlearn. Also are handouts that walk you through setting up an account in ncswlearn.
  - Someone got timed out and it was frustrating.
  - Needs to remind you to verify when you have registered someone.
- What Training needs are not being met?
  - Supervisors would like some new training – there is a work group looking at Supervision issues as a part of our Program Improvement Plan. Also a new training that can be used for Supervisors, Coaching In the Kitchen.
  - Suggestion: In Pre-Service there is the transfer of learning piece that they have to do. Incorporate this into other trainings, particularly those for Supervisors.
  - Supervisors did not go to school for management. They may be great social workers but that does not necessarily translate into being a good manager. Buncombe and some other counties have tried to use an outside consultant to do management training but it had a corporate base. If the state could develop some management training based on human services professions that would be very beneficial.
  - Data - How supervisors can use data and let them understand the real usefulness of data. (Some of this is offered in Cornerstone 4)
  - Adoption and Adoption Assistance not offered in the west or central, would like to see it even as close as Greensboro.
    - Also it would be helpful if other agencies that did adoptions could come to the trainings, even if they had to pay a fee.
    - The state used to do one for people in the Clerks Offices.
  - Court Protocol – not getting freaked out when you have to go to court and have to testify. Model court report – what would the state like to see. (Holly shared that Kirk will come to your county and help with this.)
  - IV-E
  - Documentation – there is not necessarily a documentation training, but the Division is looking at standardizing some parts of Documentation, and if that is done, a training might be able to be developed around that.
    - Currently the documentation module is part of the pre-service is on-line so anyone who took the class since it has been on-line can go back and

- access this module at any time. Interest in looking to see if there is a way to get this available for people that did not take pre-service on-line.
    - Need a concrete example of how to fill out some forms (esp licensing.)
  - General comment that training is almost too philosophy driven. The philosophy part is important, but there are also concrete needs. You go to training and then come back and don't know how to actually do what you went to training for because in the real world you have to fill out all these forms that were never mentioned in training.
  - Record mining. Don't just wait until the case gets to foster care, should be doing this from the get-go. Kevin Campbell does this and is available privately.
  - Family Service Agreements – writing them. There used to be a training on this and when they left the training they had a manual with concrete examples. This could be done well as an on-line training. (No one could figure out why this went away. The forms changed and the training was not changed according to the new forms, it was just dropped.) If it was on line the worker could review it as needed, and also the supervisor can sit with the worker.
  - Partnering with Law Enforcement – maybe as part of the Forensic training. Let us know what is our responsibility and what is Law Enforcement.
  - Ethics
  - Parenting Education – used to be a training for this with Henrita Caldwell from Colorado.
    - Something that social workers can take with them into the home, it is not reasonable to expect some of these families to attend a 23 to 46 week parenting program – some of these people can barely make it to the grocery store.
  - Train the Trainers curricula – how to get some staff in county agencies to help develop training opportunities internally.
  - ICPC – these trainings get cancelled because no one signs up. Might work well on line.
  - Be able to use teleconference to link rooms of people across the state – if there are 5 people in the east and 5 people in the west that want a training, link two rooms together.
  - Training on the in-home face to face visits for children in Foster Care. What are you supposed to be doing there? Technically if you walk in the door and see the child, you have met the mandate. There is a difference between a home visit and visiting a child in a foster home.
    - John asked what the best way to get information out to counties about this when the forms has been approved.
- Remember that Staff Development can't do everything all the time. There are other resources out there, CPR, Holly, etc. that can be used to train people. Some other resources that were discussed were:
  - Mission Hospital started giving out a DVD to every parent that has a baby – they watch it in the hospital and also give it to take home. They will be glad to come to your agency and share this. It targets Shaken Baby Syndrome – it is a non-blaming video that explains that babies cry and that is ok. Cindy McJunkin is the contact person.

- Catawba County Parenting Network – have several target kind of parenting classes where they do not have to be part of a large formal curricula.
- Use Universities and see if they need a project to work on and you can work with them so that it resolves a need for your county as well.

### Coming Soon – System of Care

The SOC of care grant for the 3 counties is getting ready to end, but we do not want SOC to go away. Several other counties have partnered with the original 3 and have figured out ways to bring SOC into their counties. One of the ways we think we can help with that is to bring SOC into these MRS meetings. The two systems parallel and compliment each other. Any suggestions or concerns about that and how it would affect these meetings?

- Not against some of the meetings together but these meetings are an opportunity to talk with colleagues and be very open and honest, and would not be comfortable talking about some things with other agencies in the room and wouldn't want to lose that opportunity.
- Also, counties can share things they are struggling with in their county and get suggestions from other counties, but this wouldn't work well with others in the room because it wouldn't be relevant to them.
- Some of the policy discussions might be inappropriate.
- Maybe every quarter have a SOC meeting, or part of the meeting time.
- Six principles are similar to MRS:
  - Cultural Competence, Child & Family Partnership. Individualized, Strength Based Care for Families, Interagency Collaboration, Community Based Services and Supports, Accountability to Results.
- How many people have some form of SOC in place?
  - Several agencies do, but it is difficult to maintain these relationships, especially with turnover within DSS as well as the other agencies.
  - It is a challenge to make System of Care a community collaboration, and not just DSS and MH.
- Statewide Collaborative – large group of public and private agencies that deal with the same populations – this group brings together the leaders of these statewide agencies twice a month. Are trying to help counties form their own collaborative groups.

### ToolTime – what are tools that you may use?

May learn about a lot of neat tools in training, but which ones do you really use frequently with families that works well?

- Tools that you learn at training to use with families can be used just as well with staff.
- Genograms & Ecomaps – do you use these when you are figuring out who should be at CFTs?
  - Uses them in foster care to help look for relationships (genogram)
  - Also in-home services to discover who the supports are for crisis planning.
  - An ecomap can help a family visualize their resources more than just talking about. Also, helps the family realize who they are resources for. There is a link between an ecomap and the Strengths/Needs assessment.
- Do people use the Miracle question? – Some do with families, also some do with staff.

- More in a 'realistic' miracle context when used with staff.
- Scaling –
  - Supervisors at one agency use all the time with staff and assume that if this is a habit that workers use it with families as well.
  - Not only have them pick what number they feel they are at, but what does that number mean to them. It is good for sparking discussion because what one person means by a 4, may not be what the other person sees as a 4. Also, what is the plan to move to the next number?
  - Also with families, if you have another family member answer the question. The client in question may rate themselves as a 5 but their spouse may say that they feel they have made more (or less) progress and rate them differently. This can prompt discussion as well.
  - Finally need to define the end points. What is a zero and what is a 10 so you know the context of a 5.
- Any other tools that you use?
  - DV tools

No December Meetings!!

January meetings:

Central: Randolph Co., January 29<sup>th</sup>

Western: Asheville St Johns Church, January 16th

East: Sampson Co., January 24<sup>th</sup>

February meetings:

Central: Winston Salem, February 27<sup>th</sup>

Western: Asheville, St. John's Church, February 19th

East: Pitt Co., February 28<sup>th</sup>